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ABSTRACT

This document describes the intergenerational project conducted in the Cedar Falls Public School System (Iowa) that involved senior citizens and youths in a learning and sharing process. The county-based extension service supported by faculty at Iowa State University assisted in the recruitment and training of senior citizen volunteers. Implemented intergenerational activities include: (1) students developing interviewing skills by interviewing three senior volunteers; (2) celebrating Black History Month by inviting three Black senior citizens to tell students about their family histories; and (3) learning about pioneer days by involving senior volunteers in teaching students about whittling, candle dipping, genealogy, Indian history, Black history, quilting, and other traditional arts and crafts. Evaluation of the project indicated that 20 senior volunteers contributed more than 407 hours to the project. Over 600 students in grades 4-7 took part with 2,229 contact hours of teachers with students. Nine schools were involved, along with 3 principals, and 19 teachers. Recommendations for successful replication of this project include organizational guidelines such as creating an advisory board and conducting meetings with school administrators; suggestions for alternative subject-matter topics for intergenerational projects; and suggestions for financial resources. Appendices include documents such as program announcements and project evaluation forms. (LP)

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"Seniors and Youth: Learning and Sharing" An Intergenerational Project

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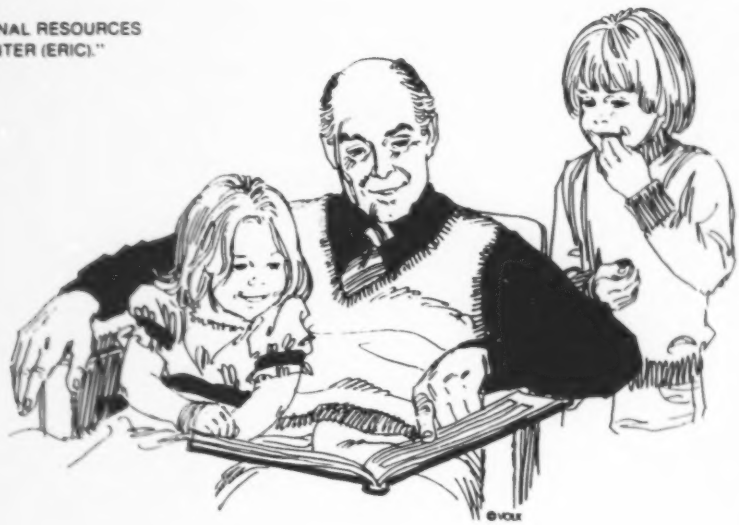

National Center of Extension Gerontology

University of Missouri-Kansas City
Kansas City, Missouri

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Seniors and Youth: Learning and Sharing

An Intergenerational Project

Created and Conducted with the
Tama County Iowa 4-H Clubs,
Mesquaki Indian Settlement School,
and the Cedar Falls Public Schools

1983-88

by

Lorine Matters
Extension Home Economist
USDA Building
Toledo, Iowa 52342

This program was made possible in part with funds provided through a grant from the Community Education Council on Aging, Little Rock Arkansas . . . in cooperation with the Cedar Falls School System and Iowa State University/Waterloo Area Extension Service.

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Preface

The "Seniors and Youth: Learning and Sharing" Project was created as part of my gerontology program development assignment while attending the Annual Summer Extension Institute on Aging which was conducted at the University of Missouri-Columbia during the summer of 1983. This project was further refined and tested during my concluding Practicuum in Intergenerational Relations for the Specialist in Aging Certificate at the University of Iowa.

Acknowledgement is extended to the faculties of Iowa State University, the University of Iowa, and the University of Missouri-Columbia, who assisted me in many facets of the conceptualization, design, testing, and refinement of the project in field settings.

The cooperation, support, and involvement of the administrative officials and participating youth of the Tama County 4-H Clubs, Mesquaki Indian Settlement School, and the Cedar Falls Public Schools is acknowledged and greatly appreciated.

The generous financial grant from the Community Education Center on Aging of Little Rock, Arkansas provided a very useful source of financial resources for our work in the Cedar Falls Public School system. The dedicated and competent professional work of my co-worker, Brooks Rector, retired Extension Home Economist in Black Hawk County, helped immeasurably in assuring the successful adaptation of this intergenerational project in a public school setting.

Appreciation is extended to all those Iowa senior citizens who generously shared their time and talent with the many young people who participated in this project. They served as a source of inspiration to all of us and they eloquently demonstrated the very rich and diverse "untapped resources" which exist among our senior citizen population.

Lorine Matters

Background of the Program

The original "Seniors and Youth: Learning and Sharing" activity was an outgrowth of a project developed by Lorine Matters while enrolled in a gerontology graduate academic course offered by the Missouri Gerontology Institute of the University of Missouri. She worked with the project and developed the program which was part of a final Practicuum assignment while completing the requirements for a Specialist in Aging certificate at the University of Iowa.

For three years, the project was part of the Tama County, Iowa 4-H Program where an average of 110 youth per year were paired with 20 senior citizens who shared their special skills with the youth who participated in the project.

As the pool of adult volunteers continues to shrink, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the cooperative extension service to recruit adult project leaders for the 4-H program. The senior citizen volunteers who participated in this project served as a very valuable source of adult volunteer leadership and they excelled both on a "one on one" basis as well as in small group meetings. They shared their knowledge and expertise in such diverse areas as sewing, woodworking, chair caning, ethnic arts, and food preparation.

The second phase of the project was conducted in the Cedar Falls Public Schools. It had its genesis at a monthly meeting of the Community Education Association of Cedar Falls, Iowa, where the personnel director of the public school district reported on the potential availability of grant funds for intergenerational projects from the Community Education Association of Little Rock, Arkansas. Participating in this meeting was Brooks Rector, Black Hawk County, Extension Home Economist, who volunteered the support of the extension service in helping the Cedar Falls Community Education Association and the Cedar Falls Public School system in submitting an intergenerational program grant proposal to the Community Education Association of Little Rock, Arkansas.

Lorine Matters, Extension County Home Economist in neighboring Tama County, Iowa, had previously created and conducted a successful model intergenerational project in her county which was entitled "Seniors and Youth: Learning and Sharing." This particular intergenerational program model was the one which was selected to be included in the grant application and Lorine Matters prepared the grant proposal and assisted in the conduct of the project. The grant application was funded in the amount of $1500 for a one-year period.

During the past year, the Tama County Extension 4-H and Youth Leaders collaborated with Lorine Matters in launching a "Senior and Youth: Learning and Sharing" Project with the native American Indian minority school in Tama County. The senior citizens who participated in this project observed that the native American Indian youth were very interested and enthused about the learning experiences provided through this project. One teacher in the minority school observed, "the Indian youth know the value of their culture—now they know the background of the white culture too, and that is good."

This particular publication relates exclusively to the intergenerational project which was conducted in the Cedar Falls Public School System.

Purpose and Rationale

The purpose of the project was to involve senior citizens and youth in a learning and sharing process. In contemporary society, the hands' skills of the past are rapidly being replaced by manufactured materials. Houses of today do not have large amounts of storage space and yesterday's memorabilia is no longer being preserved for future generations. The telephone has replaced letter writing and these verbal conversations provide no permanent record of family transactions or community events. Consequently, many family anecdotes and skills are in danger of being lost.

In most countries, the teachers of the culture are grandparents. However, in the United States, many of these grandparents live great distances from their children and grandchildren. This particular project had the objective of using senior volunteers who could serve as substitute grandparents for the youth.

When launching the project, it was found that many of the senior volunteers were willing to participate; most had good health; and all were pleased to be invited to share their expertise. It was observed that there is a relatively small group of senior citizens, who, upon retirement, prefer to disengage temporarily from organizational activities. However it was found that with small amounts of encouragement and support, this group of senior citizens indicated a willingness to participate in the project.

There is a third group of older people who feel that they have "paid their dues to society" and they prefer to maintain their own privacy and devote their time and interests to personal matters. Project personnel respected their privacy and they were not pressured to participate in the project.

Although willing to participate in this project, most of the senior citizen volunteers were reluctant to push themselves forward and they personally discounted the relative importance of their knowledge and skills.

A media campaign was launched which had the objectives of 1) informing the citizenry concerning the existence of the intergenerational project; 2) listing the eligibility criteria for senior citizen volunteers and 3) encouraging senior citizens and members of the community to support the project and to serve as volunteers.

Community Involvement

The Extension Service has long relied upon volunteers to assist in the multiplication of its educational programs throughout the community; and the county-based staff, supported by campus-based faculty at Iowa State University, assisted in the recruitment and training of volunteers and provided advisory assistance in all facets of the program.

The Community Education Board served as a major source of support for the project. The Cedar Falls School System cooperated very well and furnished educational materials, video tape materials and technicians, lunches, and transportation for the youth. Volunteers and other forms of personnel assistance were derived from other agencies, including the County Council on Aging, the County Historical Society, Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), the City Recreation Department, the YWCA, and the Public Library.

Goals and Objectives

The participating youth and their "significant others" would learn that senior citizens are capable of:

1) Making positive contributions and remaining a viable part of the community;
2) Teaching knowledge and skills that are needed in daily life;
3) Contributing to the mental development of children as they learn about the stages of the life cycle;
4) Imparting information of worth to other generations which will assist them in incorporating a sense of history and continuity in their lives.

Activities and Procedures

Cedar Falls School District administrators and teachers identified two schools where they determined that there was a perceived shortage of grandparents in the lives of the children, and these locations had school personnel who would be interested and willing to devote extra time to launching this experimental intergenerational project.

Youth in the grades from four through seven were chosen as the target group. Youth in this age group have a high interest in people and the required course in Iowa history is taught in the fifth grade.

As the project progressed, school administrators from seven additional schools requested to be included in the project.

Crucial to the success of this intergenerational project model is the creation of a positive grandparent—grandchild relationship which facilitates the development of a caring attitude in both generations.

The response to the media campaign and the recruitment of volunteers was immediate and very gratifying. A goal of twenty volunteers was set and sixteen were recruited in the first round. At the time, the resource training base was researched carefully. Cedar Falls School personnel recruited classes. The Extension home economists recruited campus-based gerontologists, adult educators, and media specialists from Iowa State University who provided training and technical assistance to the volunteers and the public school teachers and video technicians. Iowa State University "culture kits" were also utilized in the project. These kits feature a number of world cultures and include displays, personal items donated by foreign students who have attended Iowa State University and memorabilia donated by University faculty, volunteers, and friends who have traveled to the various foreign countries. The contents of these "culture kits" are subsequently organized into learning packets for display when groups are studying a particular culture. They add a visual element to the studies and are used in a diverse array of settings including 4-H clubs, public schools and libraries.

The training classes were a success, with personnel from the Cedar Falls School District, County Historical Society, Extension Service, and Iowa State University faculty, all taking part in the program. The training curriculum included 1) history of the project and reaffirmation of the importance of senior volunteers to the success of the project; 2) relationship of the project to the existing school curriculum; 3) a comprehensive description through the use of a time line, which illustrated the extensive knowledge which a senior citizen possesses in relation to a ten year old youth; 4) characteristics of successful volunteer teachers and senior citizen volunteers; and 5) enumeration of community resources which have the potential of making positive contributions to the project.

Limited progress was made during the first two months of the project. During this period little scenarios, letters, personal contacts, and a variety of informational materials were distributed to the school

administrators in the two participating schools. The school administrators' attitude could be articulated as follows: "That's so interesting, we'll do it someday!" Subsequently, letters of invitation and verbal encouragement were directed primarily to the teachers who responded positively to the project idea.

When the teachers were informed, the momentum for the project increased and when decisions were made to move forward, it was like "opening the flood gate!" It started with a fifth grade teacher who wanted her children to develop interviewing skills and she utilized three senior volunteers in her initial program. They included a representative from the only native American Indian tribe in Iowa; a retired architect who was gifted in tying fish flies; and an individual who was responsible for introducing soy beans to the state of Iowa. Several teachers in nearby classrooms stopped by periodically to observe the proceedings and the principal stopped twice during the first hour! At the close of the program, the teacher stated "You don't know what this has done for these children. Eighty-five percent of the parents in this school district are unemployed factory workers and there is major stress within the family. Today, these children had fun!"

The students prepared themselves for this experience by reading Mesquaki Indian Culture and they were prepared to pose good questions. A number of other "spin-offs" to this project included Black History Week, where three Black ladies held over one hundred 4th, 5th and 6th graders spellbound as they told about their past history and the experiences of one volunteer's grandfather who walked to Iowa in order to become a free man. The children asked "Did you know a real slave?" The discussion of slavery had a significant impact upon the children. The visiting senior citizen volunteers also introduced the children to sweet potato pie and hush puppies. One child wrote in his thank you letter: "soul food is good and hot lunches are gross!"

The youth participated in four different field trips which were directed toward pioneer days. One was held at a farm, one in the little red school house in Black Hawk Park, and two in high school gymnasiums. Teachers, several of the senior volunteers, and a number of the children all dressed in pioneer costumes. Senior volunteers taught whittling, candle dipping, genealogy, Indian fried bread, Indian history, Black history, soul food, spinning, quilting, needle work, music history, history of early settlers, local and Iowa history, heritage foods, and nature activities. The final activity was undertaken just two days prior to the close of the school year.

Additionally, the Cedar Falls School System conducted personal interviews with a number of the senior volunteers and aired these interviews through the local cable homework hotline. Outside media coverage included the Cedar Falls Citizen and Waterloo Courier Newspapers, and a Newscast on KWWL Television.

Evaluation

Twenty volunteers contributed more than 407 hours to the project. Over 600 students took part with 2,229 contact hours of teachers with students. Nine schools were involved, along with three principals, and nineteen teachers.

Children in most classes wrote a personal thank you letter to the participating senior volunteers. Cedar Falls school teachers s completed formal written evaluation instruments—100% expressed satisfaction with the project.

The senior citizens were apprised of the importance of their participation through the attentiveness and active attention and participation of the youth; the oral and written acknowledgements of appreciation by the teachers and the personal thank you notes which were received from the students. Senior citizen volunteers also learned that they could contribute skills and folklore that increased the knowledge of today s children.

The volunteers helped the youth to learn that aging is not necessarily a time for poor health. The youth were exposed to vital older people who were active and who enjoyed life. The senior citizen volunteers could provide first hand information from having been there, and they made history and culture come alive in the eyes of today's youth.

In the future, it is planned that the videotapes will be utilized in other neighboring area schools and exploratory discussions will be started with other upper elementary teachers and building principals.

Teachers have extolled the virtues of the program from the prospective of the skills and culture learned by the students and through their personal interactions with healthy older people who enjoy life. Previously, many youth to elderly contacts have been made through nursing home visitations which are not always positive and some of these field visits have frightened children about the aging process. In this particular project, the youth observed older people as enjoyable companions getting and giving a lot from life.

Individual teachers are interested in seeing the project continue in subsequent years. The school systems have been very generous about providing lunch and supplies. Many volunteers furnished their own transportation. For those who do not have transportation services available, or who no longer can drive, it has been suggested that the public schools, classroom volunteers, or a service club look-

ing for a meaningful community service project, be available to serve as drivers.

Barbara Gunn, writing in the summer issue of the *Journal of Home Economics* states "Older people do volunteer work and might do more if they were encouraged to do so." More than one-third of the sixty-five plus age population reported in the 1982 survey that they had done volunteer work. In a related survey, an additional 10% said that they would do volunteer work if they knew how to "go about it."

This project has been able to match senior citizen and youth in a special way. The grant award to pay the expenses and the success of this project serves as a model for illustrating to the community that through their efforts, they can make this valuable interaction possible for their senior citizens and youth.

Hints for the Successful Replication of this Project in Other Communities

Rationale for the project:

Most school systems offer children limited opportunities to learn about aging and few employ people over 65 years of age. Teachers, as well as parents, are often misinformed about the aging process, and they inadvertently reinforce negative attitudes and stereotypes about older persons.

Through a "Seniors and Youth: Learning and Sharing" project, schools can become a primary influence in changing children's perceptions of themselves in relationship to the aging process. With minimum effort, aging-related subject matter can be intergrated into many facets of the school curriculum, including courses in health, social studies, home economics, art, and literature.

Intergenerational programs can be designed for all areas of the school spectrum, ranging from preschool through secondary education. Program content can be academic, recreational, or experimental. The primary focus can be two-dimensional, where either one group provides information and experiences to the other group, or the two groups mutually share enriching experiences.

Organizational guidelines:

1) Create an advisory board and develop a detailed plan for the "Seniors and Youth: Learning and Sharing" project. The nucleus for the program should focus upon the involvement of older people in structured classes with intermediate-aged children with the following two-fold purpose: to make the community aware of the talented and experienced senior citizen volunteers who are willing and able to share their knowledge and teach skills that impart information of worth to the younger generations; and to enrich the classroom curriculum with living history which will contribute to the intellectual development of the children and the integration into the minds of the youth, a sense of history and continuity in their lives. See Appendix A for a sample news release which was utilized by the Black Hawk County Extension Service.
2) Conduct meetings with school administrators and mutually access the degree of interest which teachers and students in different classes may have for the project. Are there particular schools where grandparents are conspicuously absent in the lives of the students? Identify curriculum units which can be implemented by older volunteers in the classroom and which compliment the existing academic curriculum. School administrators should subsequently meet with teachers to explain the program. See Appendix B for a sample program announcement which was utilized with principals and teachers in the Cedar Falls Public Schools.
3) Recruit volunteers through a media search, word-of-mouth communication and personal contacts, and referrals which are made by friends and relatives. See Appendix C for a sample written communique which was sent to more than forty persons who were carefully identified as potential volunteers based upon their prior volunteer services in the community and with the Cooperative Extension Service.
4) Provide orientation and training to the older volunteers. School administrators, teachers, and University Extension staff can serve as the trainers. See Appendices D and E, which contain a copy of the training agenda for the senior citizen volunteers in the Cedar Falls Public School project and a creative illustration of the use of a historical time line which illustrates the comprehensiveness and depth of knowledge possessed by senior citizens.
5) Place volunteers in the classroom and each should be willing to contribute a minimum of 6 hours to the program during the course of the entire project. It is important to coordinate the schedule of the senior volunteers, arrange transportation for the seniors when necessary, and assist with the planned classroom presentation, if necessary. See Appendix F and G for sample registration forms for use with school teachers and senior volunteers.

6) Provide opportunities for teachers to evaluate the learning experience and also arrange follow-up evaluations which occur at three and six month intervals, following the completion of the project. Evaluation data can be obtained from a) responses from participating teacher (see Appendix H) b) personal thank you letters to senior citizen volunteers from participating youth (see Appendix I) and c) follow-up personal interviews with senior citizens where they are provided with opportunities to articulate the positive features of the experience, gaps or omissions which need to be filled, and opportunities to request assistance in changing their presentation.

Alternative subject-matter topics:

1) Needlework skills;
2) Skills necessary for maintaining the home, such as painting or making household repairs;
3) The art of wood carving—acquiring the techniques, handling the tools, and understanding the characteristics of wood—while sharing the philosophy of the necessity for any person to have a creative hobby;
4) Teaching bread making with an emphasis on a particular ethnic culture;
5) Utilizing a spinning wheel to teach young students how to spin and weave, and also knit into a garment;
6) Teaching the skills of a "slot loom" on which scarves can be created with hand-weaving techniques;
7) Utilizing a piano in helping young people develop public speaking skills—including the principles of researching and refining a speech and presenting it in an effective manner;
8) A fisherman could tell "tall tales" while teaching young people how to tie flies for fishing;
9) Teaching young people heritage skills from knitting, crocheting, or soft sculpture;
10) Conducting nature walks or presenting nature lectures which focus upon the lure of leaves, trees, grasses, or soils;
11) Transmission of the art of making beautiful flowers from burlap fabric which is a two-person exercise involving old and young people;
12) Presentation of a lecture by a representative of the county historical society who shares personal recollections of past events which bring local history to life.

Financial resources:

1) The most important project expense centers around the reimbursement of senior citizen volunteers for transportation costs. Financial resources should be solicited from local sources including local private foundations, civic clubs, or religious groups.
2) Cost for paper, educational materials, videotapes, and related expenses can generally be born through existing institutional budgets of the cooperating organizations and agencies.

Some closing thoughts:

1) In starting a project, think small and initially focus the project only at one or two school sites.
2) Carefully recruit, train, supervise, and support competent senior citizen volunteers.
3) Be flexible, willing to experiment, and work hard to ensure a successful initial project.
4) Despite its laudable goals, and attractiveness to most people, remember that there are senior citizens and youth who may prefer not be involved in the project. These include young people who have not yet matured sufficiently to satisfactorily participate in the project, or senior citizens who are not comfortable in the presence of youth or prefer to remain disengaged from organized group activities and events.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Black Hawk County
Extension Service News Release

"Seniors & Youth: Learning and Sharing"

This program is made possible in part with funds provided by a grant from Community Education Council on Aging, Little Rock, Arkansas . . . in cooperation with Cedar Falls School System and Iowa State University/Waterloo Area/Extension Service.

It was an intergenerational project involving senior citizens and school age youth . . . older Iowans sharing their knowledge of the past and their skill with fifth, sixth, and seventh graders in the Cedar Falls School System.

The Premise

Grandparents in most cultures have been entrusted with passing on the skills and tales of the past to younger generations. With families scattered, both parents working, telephones instead of letters, and with houses having less storage to keep memorabilia, we are in great danger of losing many of these important ties to the past.

The Pilot Project

1985 Community Education Grant Recipients of $1500 awards in addition to Waterloo Area Extension Service were from Dunbar, WV; Olympia, WA; Seattle, WA; and Monticello, AR. Lorine Matters and Brooks Rector, Extension Home Economists in Tama and Black Hawk County, respectively, with the cooperation of the Cedar Falls School System, applied for and received a grant from the Community Education Council on Aging, Little Rock, Arkansas, to be used between July, 1985 to June, 1986. The program planned was designed to involve the senior citizens with the structured classes of intermediate age children with a two-fold purpose: for the community to be aware of the talented, experienced senior volunteers who are willing and able to share the knowledge and teach skills that impart information of worth to the younger generation; and to enrich the classroom curriculum with living history which will contribute to the mental development of the children as this experience incorporates a sense of history and continuity in their lives.

Recruitment

Extension Service home economists had no trouble finding active and enthusiastic seniors to be involved in this pilot project. Twenty of them gave hundreds of hours of volunteer service sharing subjects in family and community history, genealogy, ethnic food specialties, handicrafts, and needlework, woodworking, wood carving, lapiadary, music, nature and conservation, fly-tying, and pioneer crafts.

School Cooperation

With the support of the Cedar Falls Community Education Advisory Council and Cedar Falls School Administration, the following elementary and junior high schools were involved: North Cedar, Cedar Heights, Orchard Hill, Valley Park, Hansen, Southdale, Lincoln, Holmes, and Peet.

A total of more than 600 students—4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th graders—were involved in the interaction with the senior volunteers at one or more of the events which took place.

Benefits

Iowa history is taught at the 5-6th grade level and this program was successfully integrated into the curriculum perfectly. A Mesquakie Indian told students about her past and preserving their culture. During Black History week, three ladies told theirs and served soul food. The children were held spellbound as Mrs. Brown told of her people's and her own past; of her grandfather, an ex-slave, walking into Iowa a free man. A fisherman taught fly-tying. Gordon Strayer told about introducing soybeans to Iowa and Ruth Croll introduced a music class to Ragtime.

Three Pioneer Days were held in May (one at Youngberg's farm; two indoors because of rain) and nature walks and talks went on, indoors or outdoors, under the expert guidance of Bart McAninch, retired Soil Conservationist.

The value of the past and the very special grandparent-child relationship is a combination that is impossible to define.

The volunteers committed themselves to give six

hours each during the course of the grant; they gave much more than that! And from the response of the seniors to the warm thank-you letters they received from the teachers and young people, and from the fantastic cooperation of the teachers and the school system in presenting this program, it was more than an intergenerational pilot project; it was the beginning of friendships not measured in hours.

Appendix B

Program Announcement for Principals and Teachers

Waterloo Area/Black Hawk and Tama Counties - Iowa State University Extension

PROGRAM: "Youth and Senior Citizens: Learning and Sharing Together"

This program is made possible by a grant from the National Community Education Center on Aging (CECA), and is one of five proposals in the United States funded to test model project ideas.

The Waterloo Area Extension proposal is to involve senior citizens as volunteers in one school district in the area. The Cedar Falls School System has been selected and the school officials have named North Cedar Elementary, Holmes Junior High, and Peet Junior High as the pilot schools.

Background Information:

The premise is that the older people in our society have long been the teachers of culture and skills to the younger generation.

. . . That in today's fast moving society, grandparents may live far away from grandchildren and many of our history stories, heritage skills, and cultural lifestyles are in danger of being lost with the passing of this generation.

. . . That there are more senior citizens today than ever before living fruitful lives, in good health, willing and able to be of service in the community.

Goals of the Program:

. . . That students in Cedar Falls School District will learn about history, arts and crafts, nature, and about themselves from older citizens in Black Hawk County.

. . . That there will be increased community awareness of the abilities and contributions of the older citizens.

. . . That traditional ways of transferring knowledge and skills be augmented with an intergenerational approach to learning.

Support for the Program:

. . . Will come from the Community Educational Advisory Board. The grant will cover transportation, food, and demonstration materials for the senior volunteers. The school administration will take care of arrangements for the materials needed by the students, and any transportation arrangements.

What does the Grant Require:

. . . An orientation/training period for teachers and volunteers (this will be provided by Extension staff and school personnel).

. . . Reporting . . . and copies of all resource materials relating to the project to CECA for distribution to others as a resource—newsletters, articles about the project, tapes, film, etc. CECA will receive at least two copies of the video tape resulting from this project.

A Sampling of the Kind of Senior Volunteers to Expect:

- A small lady with a twinkle in her eye and a ready smile will teach needlework skills such as Swedish weaving, or help young persons learn simple skills needed in the home such as painting and simple repairs.
- A very talented man will introduce young people to the art of wood carving, acquiring the techniques, handling the tools, and understanding the characteristics of wood, while sharing his philosophy on the need for any person to have a creative hobby.
- A "young" senior lady who likes to work with yeast dough will teach bread making with an emphasis on the ethnic skills of a Czech bakery.
- A little lady who has carried her spinning wheel all over the state of Iowa (under the auspices of the Iowa Arts Council) will teach the young how to spin and weave and also knit the yarns into fabric.
- A kind and gentle man who has raised his grandson will share his philosophy of life with young people while teaching them how to make a "slot loom" on which they can create scarves with hand-weaving techniques.
- A gracious black lady over eighty, who speaks, sings, and plays the piano with great talent, will help young people develop public speaking skills, including how to research and refine a presentation, and present it effectively.
- A fisherman will "tell tall tales" (ed. note: my words, not his!), but he will be delighted to have others interested in his art work, learning how to tie flys for fishing. This skill is for those with fine hand coordination.
- A lady of many talents has said she would enjoy teaching heritage skills: knitting, crocheting, soft sculpture to young people. In her younger days, she was a milliner and taught women how to make hats from scratch.
- A retired conservationist will share his love of nature with young people through nature walks or

nature talks, the lore of leaves and trees or grasses and soils. He also bakes bread as a hobby; it was his way to relieve tensions during his professional life, and he still enjoys it and will share!

- A grandmother makes beautiful flowers from burlap fabric, but it is a two-person task, so while the two work together, they could talk of many things.
- Volunteers from the historical society will share the heritage of Cedar Falls through personal recollections as together the past comes alive as old and young talk together, the Ice Museum and historical homes would be resources.
- This is a sampling of those who have already volunteered. Most of them are willing to be a part of the program "if the timing is right." Many travel during the year, but if dates, times, and places can be agreed upon, the results should be exciting. The program needs to be "custom-designed" with teachers in order to be successful.

We hope many teachers will see this
as an opportunity to enrich
the lives of their students.

Appendix C

A Written Transmittal to Potential Senior Volunteers for "Seniors and Youth: Learning and Sharing"

A new opportunity in programming has come Extension's way through our participation in the Cedar Falls Community Education Advisory Council. Extension has applied for, and received, a grant from the Community Education Center on Aging (CECA) in Arkansas *to carry out a program with youth and older citizens . . . beginning now and ending June, 1986.* Lorine Matters, Tama County Extension Home Economist, is "first mate" in this endeavor; I'm her back-up person!! The details are being worked out through the combined efforts of the *Community Education Advisory Board* in Cedar Falls, *Iowa State University*—(Tama and Black Hawk Counties in particular)—*Extension Service*, and the *Cedar Falls Community Schools*.

At this point in the very initial stages of our planning, we need to find twenty volunteers, brave and willing, who will pledge six hours of their time during the coming year in a "Seniors and Youth: Learning and Sharing" program.

We think *YOU* would be a super person to be so involved, not only because of your talents, but also because you have the enthusiasm in learning, the willingness to teach others and a liking for people (else, why would you have been doing this very thing already?)

In answer to questions now whirling around in your head:

Why should I do this?

This intergenerational program will provide youth with a golden opportunity to learn to know you, share a heritage, explore a new dimension in their life. YOU will have the refreshing experience that comes from being around young people. (For some of you, this might be a continuation of your contacts because you have grandchildren; for others it might be an enriching experience you have not enjoyed in some time).

What will it cost?

The grant provides a portion of money to be used for mileage, teaching supplies, demonstration materials, etc., as needed. We would hope your only costs would be your TIME, your TALENT, and your ENERGY. The Extension Service and the schools will supply materials and also take care of needs of the students with whom you work.

Perhaps you are saying, I'm not a teacher. How do I plan all this?

We (Extension) will provide a training-orientation period in cooperation with the teachers/staff in the designated learning center. Furthermore, we will help you set up the sequence of learning necessary to accomplish this learning/sharing experience. We feel it is our responsibility to assist you all along the way. So you will have us as a support team!

Where will this take place?

Sites will be determined based on the learning experiences offered. It might be in school rooms; it might be in the city recreation center, the park, the library. It depends wholly on WHAT is offered, and the environment most suitable to the situation.

When do we begin?

The wheels are turning right now to orient the teachers to this opportunity at their in-service training in late August. If we have a profile from *several of you* volunteers who will let us use *you* as "examples" at these meetings, the teachers will have a clear idea of the program. Enclosed with this letter is a form on which you can help us provide such a "sketch" for our use when we meet with the teachers at that time.

In answer to "when do we begin?" AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!!

We'll be scanning the mailbox each day, eager for your reply.

Sincerely,

Brooks Rector,
Extension Home Economist

Lorine Matters
Extension Home Economist

*Post Script

We mentioned this at our "Hats Off" party . . . some of you may remember. If you have stayed with me to the end of this letter, I hope you will respond and share ANY kind of thoughts you have about this program. We will be delighted to have your reaction, and your suggestions. We're quite excited about this opportunity. People like YOU will make it become a reality! THANK YOU, in advance for your interest!

RESPONSE to the "Seniors and Youth: Learning and Sharing" program idea:
(Thanks for sending back at your earliest convenience).

_____ YES _____ NO I am interested in the "Seniors and Youth: Learning and Sharing" program and am willing to consider participating in it.

If "YES," please answer the following question:

Of the things you DO and ENJOY DOING, what would you most like to share with young people in this "Seniors and Youth: Learning and Sharing "program?"

(Please describe briefly)

_____

_____

_____

_____

(Other comments:)

_____

_____

_____

A return envelope that needs no postage is enclosed.

THANK YOU for your response. We will be in touch with you!

Brooks Rector
Extension Home Economist

Appendix D

Orientation of Volunteers for
"Senior and Youth: Learning and Sharing"

(A Community Education Pilot Project - 1985-86 with a grant from
Community Education Council on Aging, Arkansas)

co-sponsored by ISU—Black Hawk and Tama County Extension Service

Cedar Falls Recreation Center
October 15, 1985

AGENDA

9:00	Registration - Beverages and Snack	
	Introductions and "How it all Began"	Brooks Rector, Black Hawk Co. Extension Home Economist
	"Seniors - A Living History Resource"	Lorine Matters, Tama Co. Extension Home Economist
	"Dimensions for Future Sharing"	Clair Brooks Administration, Personnel Cedar Falls Schools
	"The School Environment"	Selected Personnel Cedar Falls Schools
	"Strategies for Being Senior Teachers"	Penny Ralston ISU Home Economics Educator
	"Your Turn to Speak!" (How do you see your role?)	Group Discussion
	"Historical Resources at Your Disposal"	Rosemary Beach, Director Cedar Falls Historical Society
	"The Nitty Gritty Details" (travel, supplies, record keeping, etc.)	Lorine Matters, Brooks Rector, Clair Brooks
	Questions/Concerns	
NOON	ADJOURN	

Appendix E

Time Line—Exercise for Training Volunteers

Waterloo Area Extension Service
"Senior and Youth: Learning and Sharing"

Premise:

Senior citizens often discount the value of their expertise. They think their memories and skill of yesteryear have little value. A time line can help to give them a sense of history.

Objective:

After the time line exercise, senior citizens will appreciate the very real contribution they can make to the education of youth merely by living through history.

Method:

Place a long sheet of white paper across the front of the room with a line and "1986" written in felt marker at the right side.

1) Ask for some to date themselves at the far left of the time line (ours was 1904).
2) Ask for important dates people remember: Pearl Harbor, Sputnik, Prohibition, Kennedy's or Roosevelt's death, electricity came to our home, etc., and write these on the time line. The seniors will remember personal anecdotes and share them as the dates go up.
3) Ask how old a fifth grader (or whatever age range being worked with) is and place that on the time line.
4) Now point out their vast information store compared to a 10 year old's and how living through history can make the senior citizen a well qualified expert on the subject of history.

5) This time line subsequently was adapted by some of the senior citizens in their classroom teaching of history and genealogy.

Appendix F

Registration for Teachers

_____ We are interested in using senior citizen volunteers in the "Seniors and Youth: Learning and Sharing" program this spring.

The program(s) which will fit into our curriculum: (Describe your needs, too!)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Month preferred _____

School _____

Contact Person _____ Telephone _____

What is the best time to contact _____

Additional Comments _____

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR RESPONDING!

NO POSTAGE NECESSARY—JUST FOLD AND STAPLE!!

Appendix G

Registration for Senior Citizen Volunteers

RESPONSE to the "Seniors and Youth: Learning and Sharing" program idea:
(Thanks for sending back at your earliest convenience).

_____ YES _____ NO I am interested in the "Seniors and Youth: Learning and Sharing" program and willing to consider participating in it.

If "Yes," please answer the following question:

Of the things you DO and ENJOY DOING, what would you most like to share with young people in this "Seniors and Youth: Learning and Sharing" program?

(Please describe briefly)

_____

_____

_____

_____

(Other comments:)

_____

_____

_____

A return envelope that needs no postage is enclosed.

THANK YOU for your response. We will be in touch with you!

Appendix H

Teacher Evaluation

Your evaluation of the Learning and Sharing Intergenerational Program would be most helpful. An envelope which needs no postage is included for your convenience in returning the completed sheet to us.

Date of Visit _____ School _____

Teacher _____ Grade Visited _____

Volunteer(s) _____

Program _____

Students Present _____ Boys _____ Girls _____

How did the program fit into your curriculum?

_____

_____

Briefly describe new insights gained by the children:

_____

_____

Describe some interactions between youth and the senior citizen(s):

_____

_____

_____

Additional Comments:

_____

_____

_____

Thanks!

Brooks Rector, Extension Home Economist
1022 W. 5th St., Waterloo, IA 50702
Telephone: (319) 234-6811

Lorine Matters, Extension Home Economist
Tama County, USDA Building, Toledo, Iowa 52342
Telephone: (515) 484-2703

Appendix I

Written Response from A Participating Youth

Dear Mrs. Lynn
Thank you for talking to us. How many cheeses do you know of? I didn't know hardly of any more until you came. I liked all of the cheese you gave. Did you ever make a bird out of butter? I never saw your butter cow. I wish I did. Do you get rich for making the butter animals? Do you get butter all over yourself?

Sincerely,

Martel Pushetonequa

Appendix J

Sample Series of Evaluation Questions
Which Can Be Posed to Participating Senior Volunteers

INTERVIEW WITH SENIOR VOLUNTEERS

Now that you have experienced volunteering with youth, I would like to ask you the following questions about the experience.

1) How has 4-H or the school system changed since you were a participating youth?

2) How did the children react when you showed or told them about your particular experiences or skills? Did you realize that they would be so interested? What surprised you the most about this experience?

3) What did the youth seem to like best about your presentation?

4) What did you like best about this experience?

5) What will you change if you are invited to make this presentation again in the future?

6) Do you have any other ideas or suggestions for improving or expanding this program?